

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

HAKEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NUMBER 30

Hello everyone,

I hope the weather is on the improve in your part of this great land. Going by the correspondence I've had from various people over the last six months it has been on the dry side for most. Here in our district it had been another miserable year and then broke in February producing 10.5 inches (more than a third of our average total). It helped save a few plants but without good follow up rain it is deteriorating again.

Some people may think that with a 28 inch rainfall we have it pretty good compared with other districts but in reality if rainfall is erratic or you don't get your average or close, it doesn't matter if you live in the Victorian mallee with a 10 inch rainfall or in the Queensland tropics with 80 inches it can still be tough going!

Despite the conditions most plants survive and Hakeas have proved to be among the toughest of our native plants but even some that had gone through previous dry times felt it this time. I thought that I would lose my Hakea Bakeriana's but the march rain saved them. One had looked as though it was finished but has resprouted from the base. I think the next 6 months will decide it's fate. Another species that responded to the soaking were the Hakea Cyclocarpas which at the best of times were very sparsely branched. After the rain lots of new branches sprouted from the lignotuber's making much more alive looking plants. They have flowered here and have very pretty red and white flowers. They have not produced seed as yet.

Hakea Ivoryii

This shrub or tree to 35 feet occurs naturally in the south west of Queensland and the north west of New South Wales. The "flora of Australia" reports that it is lignotuberous resprouting from the base. Foliage is grey-green in colour finely divided. Flowers are large racemes whitish- green. Spectacular in flower. Seed capsule is woody with a long beak opening on maturity.

One of the highlights of the past season (it's not all doom and gloom) was the setting of seed of my Hakea Ivoryii. In previous years they have flowered but all forming seed pods have aborted. This season after flowering (in November) everything went well and pods matured fully. I have two plants which are about 11 years old and one interesting thing was the different seed produced. One was what I would call normal and the other was very thin in form in comparison. I have germinated each this year so there is no problem in that regard.

My original plant of this species which is twelve years old is a small low stunted planted that hasn't done anything in it's life. Limited seed is available of Hakea Ivoryii to anyone interested. It should be planted while fresh and viable.

Hakea "Burrendong Beauty"

This plant is a supposed hybrid between Hakea Petiolaris and Hakea Myrtoides which seems an unlikely partnership. It is low and spreading up to 25 feet with pinkish maroon flowers clustered along the stems. It is spectacular in flower and a good bird attractor. It can be controlled by cutting back but can suffer die back from where it is cut. It is normally cutting grown and apparently some plants will set seed while others don't.

When I first joined the Hakea study group, in one of the newsletters there was mention of different people growing seedlings of "Burrendong Beauty" and observing the variety of leaf form etc. I have grown some of my own and they have started to flower with a range of colour from light pink to maroon. The most pleasing thing was some of them closely resemble Hakea Myrtoides. I have 4 plants close to each other and after a couple of years are smallish compact beautiful shrubs.

As Hakea Myrtoides Has been unreliable to grow here, including grafted plants and Myrtoides seed hard to grow on after germination (for me anyway) I'm looking forward to seeing how these plants perform in the future. I have not had any seedlings that lean towards Petiolaris. I would be interested to hear of anyone's experience's with this plant or the offspring.

SEED BANK

Seed is available to any member on request, with no restrictions on species wanted. If seed is plentiful I will be generous. As there is tons of seed in the bank which I have included my own should be used up if possible. I don't like the idea of seed sitting around for years in envelopes.

Seed viability decreases with age so sowing seed that is old can be a waste of time & effort. Any request will include a short note about the seed sent.

Please write and let me know what species you want and I will try to supply same.

INTERESTING SNIPPETS

Dr Tony Crawford a member from Hobart Tasmania reports that Hobart is the driest capital in Australia with a 28 inch rainfall.

Murray Chapman from prospect S.A has a Hakea Laurina that only grows a bit over 4 feet tall. I have germinated some seed from this shrub so will be looking forward to seeing if they retain that size here in S.E Queensland.

Anyone wanting Hakea plants should make the effort and attend the S.A AP.S plant sale in spring or autumn. Max Ewer regularly has hundreds of Quality plants with a large range of species for sale. I paid a visit to their venue last October and the whole show is a credit to the organizers.



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\$ 5-00 \$ 10 o/s

Yours faithfully

Len Coe